



Madeline Island

Wilderness Preserve News

Summer 2023

“PRESERVING OUR SENSE OF PLACE”

By Bonnie Matuseski, President

For thirteen years I have been an enthusiastic volunteer for the Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve and was recently honored to be elected President. I am humbled by the vision and dedication of the founding members who started buying land in 1987, as they formed one of the first local land trusts in the state of Wisconsin. With the dedication of volunteer boards and generous donations of members ever since, the MIWP has grown to 2900 acres, permanently protecting our Madeline Island for many generations to come.

What is it that makes Madeline Island special to you and your family? The culture of this island is born in the natural beauty of its land and water and the connections we make with the natural world. “Island time” allows us to gather with family and friends to watch the glow of a sunset or enjoy a canopied hike in our forests. Sense of place is defined as a condition of meaning and attachment. I think preserving our sense of place is the driving force behind the MIWP, a mission not just for today but for the long-term future of our Madeline Island Community. We care for what we love.

MIWP is an active and thriving organization. Our dedicated board meets regularly to guide our educational programming, forest management, invasive species work, trail improvements and land acquisition opportunities.

This summer we will offer six evening lectures at the museum, two guided mushroom-foraging hikes, and two guided hikes on the North End. We will continue our partnership with the Madeline Island Book Club, meeting this summer to explore Thoreau’s Walden Pond. Please see our website: www.miwp.org to learn about all our programs, which are free and open to the public.

The trail committee has been working hard and planning trail improvements for you to enjoy. You can find new trail maps on our website and download printable versions. Once on the trails, you will be guided with new trail signs and mile markers and find easy access to off-road parking at the new Sowl Trailhead and Schoolhouse Road entrances. In 2023, duckboards will be built and installed on wet areas of the Nucy Meech Trail to improve your hiking there. We regularly partner with our sister organization, Madeline Island Trails, to maintain and groom our trails, and we greatly appreciate their help – as I did this winter when I skied and snowshoed the well-attended trails.

While we have not purchased new land recently, we diligently watch for opportunities to acquire environmentally significant property that is contiguous to our present holdings. *(continued on page 2)*



Our multi-year program to contain and mitigate the harmful effect of invasive species continues. We contract with the Bay Area Environmental Consulting to tackle buckthorn, barberry, and Eurasian honeysuckle, and they in turn contract with private landowners to eradicate these invasive plants at no cost to the owner. We have seen substantial success with this program and encourage you to help us contain invasive species by accepting BAEC's offer to treat your property.

I have been asked, "Why should I be a member?", and it is easy for me to answer: I want to be part of the future of Madeline Island. I want to see this quiet,

forested Island preserved for my grandchildren to enjoy, to find awe in our spring wildflowers, or see the milky way dance across the sky. These connections between people and the natural world are powerful, restorative, and give meaning to our lives.

Thank you for your membership and helping us preserve the natural heritage of Madeline Island. Please join us in our work. Look for opportunities to explore our trails, volunteer your time, or renew membership on our website. I hope to see you enjoying a lecture at the Museum or hiking a trail this year

Bonnie Matuseski, Board President

AN UPDATE ON THE WILD MADELINE REVIVAL PROJECT

By Erik R Olson, Associate Professor of Natural Resources, Northland College

We have had a long winter, and mosquito season is just around the corner. Last summer our research team, myself and my two research assistants, Sydni Bennette and Bridget Stroede, set out to install camera traps for the Wild Madeline Revival Project. Despite clouds of mosquitos chasing us through the woods, high humidity, and a good thunderstorm, we were able to install all the camera traps over a two-day window. We bushwhacked, sprayed plenty of mosquito repellent, ate food around a campfire in Big Bay State Park, enjoyed a sunset on the beach, bird watched, waded through wetlands, and used a road bike and van to shuttle ourselves between sites. While checking one camera, I saw a coyote busting through marshland vegetation with a gosling in its mouth – explaining the racket of honks I had heard only moments prior. The coyote ran within 30 yards of us, mouth full of gosling. Surprised by my presence it bolted deeper into the marsh. We definitely had an adventure.

In late August, my two research assistants drove to the island to check a subset of our camera traps. When we got the data back to the lab, we did what anyone with a trail camera would do, we looked at the photos and videos. Seeing what our trail cameras have captured is a bit like Christmas! And we were not disappointed: a curious doe, lazy bear cubs, a brave sandhill crane, a courasing coyote, a buck in velvet, owls and broad winged hawks hunting. Some of these photos and videos have already been posted to the Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve Facebook page and web site; if you haven't seen them yet, go check them out.

What's important is that these photos and videos also represent scientific data. After collecting the SD cards from the cameras, all contents are uploaded to our shared cloud storage site where we share data with our UW-Madison colleagues. The photos are then uploaded into the photo classification software called "Camelot",

where we then classify them and extract various forms of data from the images. During this school year, my research assistants have been busy classifying photos and videos from our August visit, as well as historical camera trap data from a project on the Island in 2011. These historical data along with our Wild Madeline results will allow us to assess how the wildlife community of the Island has changed over time and to ask a variety of scientific questions about wildlife in the broader Apostle archipelago.

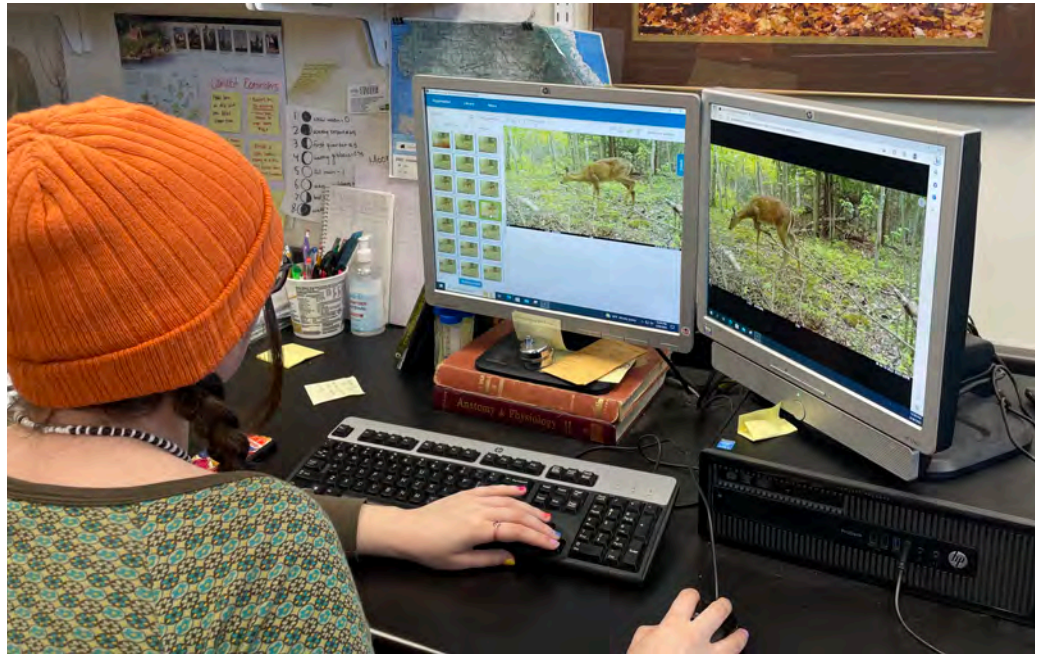


Northland students, Sydni Bennette and Bridget Stroede, checking camera traps and braving Island mosquitos last summer

We had scheduled a trip to the island in March to check all camera traps, but the timing coincided with one of our major winter snowstorms. We are currently planning a camera check for some time in May when hopefully most of the snow will be gone. We will provide you with more photos and videos once we complete that camera check – stay tuned.

This project would not be possible without the support of a gracious donation from the Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve. We currently have funding to maintain the cameras for at least one more summer with potential to maintain them longer-term. This is important because camera trap projects require patience. We must wait while the cameras do their diligent work collecting photos and videos, and then we need time to turn those images into data.

You may see us out and about this year, especially this spring as we maintain the camera traps. If you do,



Analyzing trail-camera photos of Madeline wildlife at Northland College

please stop and say hello. We will continue sharing project updates and interesting wildlife stories on the MIWP Facebook page and website. If our initial observations tell us anything – it’s definitely wild out there!

“SOME LIKE IT HOT” AT JULY 4TH PARADE *By Victoria Erhart*

I can sum up last year’s Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve Fourth of July parade float in a single word: rain. After months of planning we got rained out, first time ever. MIWP floats rely heavily on soluble paper, and it was pouring. A million thanks to Eric and to Jennifer Engstrom who stayed up all night making plans but never got a chance to strut their stuff.

For the 2023 MIWP Fourth of July float, we are once again going to take on my old nemesis climate change, although somewhat obliquely, in a float called “Some Like it Hot”. Think of all the nasty beasts that are doing better in a warming climate: deer ticks, bark beetles, spongy moths, deer ticks, mosquitoes, emerald

ash borers, deer ticks... Now picture those same guys dressed in bathing suits and truly enjoying their newly tropical environment. Lyme mojito, anyone?

You can see where I am going with this, even if I can’t, so join us and make it work! Insect costumes are in the “pre-design phase” so just wear black and we’ll do the rest. Meet at the marina 30 minutes prior to parade time (the parade usually starts at 10:30 AM, but check with the Chamber of Commerce) under the MIWP banner. Or just look for some really big bugs in tropical attire. Children and dogs absolutely welcome. For questions, call Victoria Erhart at 715-747-2277 in early July.



SUMMER 2023 PROGRAMS

Saturday, May 27th, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m. *Annual MIWP Spring Bird Hike* Victoria Erhart, MIWP board member, and Peter Hudleston, Professor of Geology, University of Minnesota, will lead a hike for beginners and experts alike. Bring binoculars and wear good waterproof footwear. **Location:** Madeline Island Town Park.

Saturday, May 27th, 6:00 p.m. *MIWP's 34th Annual Meeting & Reception: The Gift of the Loon* Speaker: Nancy Langston, Distinguished Professor of Environmental History, Michigan Tech University. At the Madeline Island School of the Arts. (*details, page 6*)

Saturday, June 10th, 10:00 – Noon. *Early Summer Foraging for Mushrooms*

Leader: Samantha Dobson, naturalist, educator, and Island resident. Learn how to ethically and sustainably harvest early season mushrooms, specifically oyster mushrooms, on Madeline Island.

Location: Capser Trail, Middle Road Trailhead.

Wednesday, July 5th, 5:30 & 7:00 p.m. *Northern Nights, Starry Skies – Special Film Screening*

Production of PBS North and WRPT, Northern Nights Starry Skies is a 60-minute documentary celebrating star-bright skies, Dark Sky Places, indigenous star knowledge, and our stewardship of the night sky. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor. (*details, page 6*)



Peter Hudleston and Victoria Erhart lead last year's soggy bird hike

Wednesday, July 12th, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Loon Watch*

Speaker: Erica Lemoine, Loon Watch Coordinator, Sigurd Olson Institute. Learn all about loons, their calls, their ecology, and hear stories that teach us how to protect them. A great program for adults and kids alike. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

Tuesday, July 18th, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. *Summertime Book Gathering: Circling Down Wind – An Introduction to Henry David Thoreau's Walden* **Leader:** Alan Brew, Director, Sigurd Olson Environmental Institute. In his book *Sky's Witness*, E.L. Rawlins confesses that he can't read more than a page or two of *Walden* at a time. "I can't charge up to it face on and read straight through," he writes. "I always examine the cover for a while, then circle downwind." In making this confession, Rawlins likely speaks for many of us; *Walden* can be intimidating, especially if you attempt to read it straight through. In this presentation, Alan Brew will offer suggestions for approaching *Walden* from the downwind side, dipping in a few pages, or a few chapters, at a time. **Location:** Madeline Island Library. In collaboration with the Madeline Island Book Club. See MIWP web site for reading suggestions and zoom address.

Wednesday, July 26th, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Ladies of the Lighthouses*

Speaker: Bob Mackreth, Apostle Island Historian. For nearly a century, the lighthouses of the Apostle Islands served a dual purpose: navigational beacons and family homes. Scores of women raised families at the light stations, several gave birth out on the islands, many tended the lamps along with their husbands, and more than one performed acts of genuine heroism. Join historian Bob Mackreth for a close look at the women who rose to the challenges of life in this extraordinary environment. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

Wednesday, August 2nd, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

How to Use Your Harvested Mushrooms: Tips, Tricks and Recipes for Home Preservation

Speaker: Samantha Dobson, naturalist, educator, and Island resident. Learn about foraging for wild mushrooms and how to preserve, store, and enjoy them through the season and winter months. Discussion will cover common wild mushrooms found on Madeline Island and region. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.



Samantha Dobson leading one of her ever-popular mushroom hikes

Wednesday, August 16th, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Chequamegon Bay Birds...and How to Save Them

Speaker: Ryan Brady, Conservation Biologist, Wisconsin DNR Bureau of Natural Heritage Conservation. Birds bring joy to many of us, yet recent studies show alarming declines in many species, including backyard favorites like orioles, jays, and juncos. In this presentation, get to know the birds of the Chequamegon Bay region, how their populations are faring, and actions we can all take to stem the decline. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.

Wednesday, August 23rd, 7:00 – 8:00 p.m. *Beavers for Biodiversity, Climate Resilience and Restoring the Hydrology of Lake Superior*

Speaker: Bob Boucher, advisor to the Beaver Institute and highly regarded expert on beaver hydrology. Ponds and canals created by beaver dams are the natal structure of most rivers in North America where they help support biodiversity and provide critical water quality benefits. This presentation will explore how restoring beaver populations and the structures they build is one of the most cost-effective things we can do for the health of the Lake Superior watershed. At the Madeline Island Museum, co-sponsor.



Board members Tom Kromroy and Steve Mueller installing signage for the new Sowl Trailhead

Saturday, September 9th, 10:00 – Noon. *Fall Foraging for Mushrooms*

Leader: Samantha Dobson, naturalist, educator, and Island resident. Learn about mushroom identification, phenology, habitat, and safe harvesting techniques. **Location:** Schoolhouse Trailhead, 2865 Schoolhouse Road.

Saturday, September 16th, 9:00 – Noon. *Hike the North End Forest*

Explore MIWP's north end forest with its stands of ancient hemlock, oaks and maple, and an abundance of mushrooms. The trails are rustic so good hiking boots, (waterproof) and adventuresome spirit are required. **Location:** Meet at new Sowl Trailhead, 3547 North Shore Road.

Saturday, October 7th, 9:00 – Noon. *Annual Fall Hike and Potluck*

Join us as we explore the Island's north end forest. **Location:** Sowl Trailhead, 3547 North Shore Road. The annual potluck will follow the hike at a location to be determined. All are welcome. For updates and details see the MIWP Website:

www.miwp.org.

Programs at the Museum theater have a 70-person capacity ... arrive early.

Hikes will be held, rain or shine. Consult the MIWP website for updates.

All Events are free (except the Spring Reception) and open to the public.

34TH ANNUAL MEETING AND EVENING RECEPTION

The Wilderness Preserve will be hosting its 34th Annual Meeting this coming Memorial Day weekend, Saturday May 27th, at the Madeline Island School of the Arts. The event will be an evening reception with an informal buffet of hearty hors d'oeuvres and wine service, catered again this year by our own Madeline Island Farmhouse. A social gathering and food service begins at 6:00 pm, with the program beginning at 7:30 pm. This year's program features:

NANCY LANGSTON

DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY
MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY

"THE GIFT OF THE LOON"

Noted author and environmental historian, Nancy Langston, explores the history and restoration of common loons in the upper Great Lakes region. She delves into how climate change, toxic chemicals, and energy extraction have affected loon populations, and ways we can ensure a hopeful future for loons as well as ourselves

The price of the Spring Reception is \$35 / person

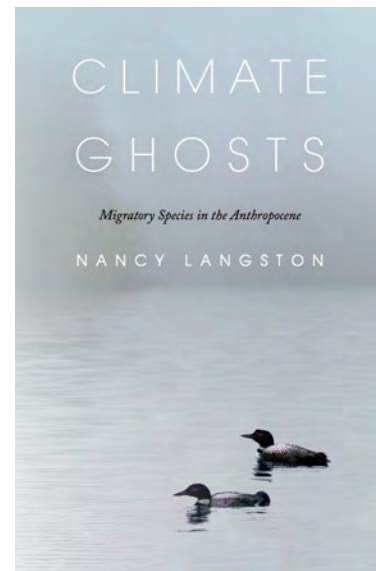
Reservations can be made online through the

MIWP Website: www.miwp.org

or by mail:

MIWP Treasurer, Ned Hancock

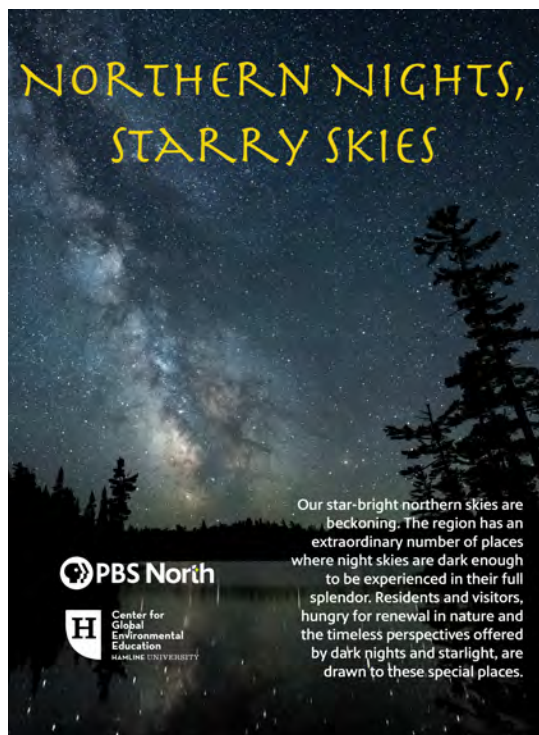
1204 Mount Curve Ave, Minneapolis, MN 55403



NORTHERN NIGHTS, STARRY SKIES – FILM SCREENING

Wednesday, July 5th

**Two shows: 5:30 pm and 7:00 pm
at the Madeline Island Museum**



Northern Nights, Starry Skies is a new 60-minute documentary produced by PBS North and WRPT. It will be introduced by John Shepard, co-produced and Associate Professor and Director of Multimedia Development at Hamline University's Center for Global Environmental Education.

Join photographer Travis Novitsky, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, on a visually stunning exploration of the heavens as seen from Voyageurs National Park, the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, and Quetico Provincial Park – together comprising the world's largest designated Dark Sky sanctuary. Ojibwe artist and scholar Carl Gawboy shares indigenous star knowledge complemented by indigenous and cultural astronomers Jim Rock and Jessica Heim and astronomer Bob King. Learn how artificial light is impacting our world and about the movement to reduce the harmful human health and environmental effects of light pollution.

Co-produced with Hamline University Center for Global Environmental Education (CGEE), this is an experience that will transform your appreciation of the North Country's spectacular starry skies!

2022-2023 MIWP CONTRIBUTING MEMBERS – THANK YOU !

MIWP BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Madeline Island
Wilderness Preserve
PO Box 28
La Pointe, WI 54850
www.miwp.org

-----Detach here and mail today-----

***Yes, I'd like to support the preservation and protection
of natural areas on Madeline Island!***

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

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☐ \$1000 Benefactor ☐ \$500 Sustaining ☐ \$100 Supporting ☐ \$50 Contributor ☐ Other

☐ Please make my gift anonymous.

☐ Gift in memory of: _____

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☐ Send gift card to: _____

Thank you for your generous contribution!

Your dues are tax deductible. Membership is through December 31, 2023
Please make checks payable to MIWP and send to:

**Madeline Island Wilderness Preserve
P.O. Box 28 La Pointe WI 54850**

or contribute online at www.miwp.org